

OPINION

LOCAL

GARY

From 4A

three in a row for the Crest Chargers...

A present for every kid in the world this Christmas. A dry, warm house for everyone. A holiday season free of automobile accidents, fires, disease and any other catastrophe...Peace and protection for all of our men and women of the military, especially those serving in harm's way.

And, most of all, the assurance that all of life's good gifts and blessings do not come from you, Santa, but from a Loving God who cares so much for all of us that He came to us and sacrificed all for us.

Merry Christmas to everyone, and may 2005 be your best year ever!

ANDIE

From 4A

authentic and often lights and sound are professional quality. Despite all that, the story from the book of Luke portrayed by kids in homemade costumes will always mean more

HEFFNER

From 4A

so I borrowed an electric razor. I was standing in the bathroom, in a puddle of water, when I tried to plug the razor into an outlet.

The prongs had spread a little, and I held them together and plugged them in. I know, I know, that wasn't too brilliant. The shock knocked me across the large bathroom and melted my watchband. As Amos Hoople used to say, I shoulda stood in bed.

That was one of the dumbest things I've ever done in my life. But you can see that it was all caused by the necessity to shave.

I'm trying to work up the nerve to quit. Maybe I'll just taper off and see how that works.

I can always tell people I'm growing a beard for a part in a play or something.

LETTERS TO SANTA

Dear Santa, Alex would like Princess and Pauper Barbie that sings also. She wants an airplane with butterflies that you try to catch. A waling Nemo for the bathtub would also be nice.

Reed would like a painting easel, a race car, and Rescue Heroes in a tank.

We have been very good all year. We have both done chores every day. We always use good manners. Love, Alex and Reed

Dear Santa, What I would like for Christmas is a Duke Blue Devils Hoodie and a Duke Blue Devils pocket book and wallet. And a lil' Bratz Ski

Christmas Past

Not as much money and gifts but a lot of love

By ANDIE BRYMER
Staff Writer

Christmas was not always the commercialized holiday we celebrate today. Decades ago the day marking Christ's birth was a simpler affair. Three elders from White Oak Manor agreed to look back to this time and share their memories with the Herald.

There were no tall piles of gifts beneath Betty Ledbetter's tree. An apple, an orange, pieces of candy and nuts were left by Santa. She and her siblings were lucky to get one present apiece.

"We couldn't afford it. We lived on the farm," she said. "If you got one thing you were doing good but we were a happy family."

Gene Jeffries, the only boy in his family, typically got a Roy Rogers toy gun. He would awaken before 6 a.m. Christmas morning.

"You were up to see what you were going to get," he said.

At Etta Parton's home, a prosperous year meant a store-bought baby doll. Otherwise, her mother made rag dolls.

Mrs. Ledbetter, the next to youngest child in her family

of eight kids, was determined to get a peek at Santa. She hid in a closet, prepared to stay there until the jolly old elf came down the chimney. Instead, she fell over items in the closet.

"That was the scariest time in my life. I thought Santa Claus had knocked me down," Mrs. Ledbetter said.

Her older siblings laughed and her dad scolded her. Nevertheless, Santa still brought her a baby doll.

Mr. Jeffries was a believer in Santa until he found toys stashed under a bed.

"I thought a lot of Santa till I messed around and found the toys," he said.

His discovery remained a secret out of fear the gifts would be rescinded.

Trees weren't available at stores like they are today. Mr. Jeffries remembers his family finding the perfect tree months in advance and leaving it in the woods till December. They decorated the tree with tinsel. The branches which were pruned to shape the tree, were used around the house as additional decorations.

Mrs. Ledbetter remembers making "snow" for the tree from toilet paper and ornaments from tin foil and red paper.



BETTY LEDBETTER

Presents were few but food was plentiful.

"We didn't have a whole lot of money but we had plenty of food," Mr. Jeffries said.

Mrs. Ledbetter describes a table laden with turkey and sweet potato and pumpkin pies. Mr. Jeffries remembers chocolate and coconut cakes and ham from the smoke-house.

New Year's Day was the occasion for another big meal for Mrs. Ledbetter's family. Black-eyed peas insured the person eating would possess plenty of pennies during the new



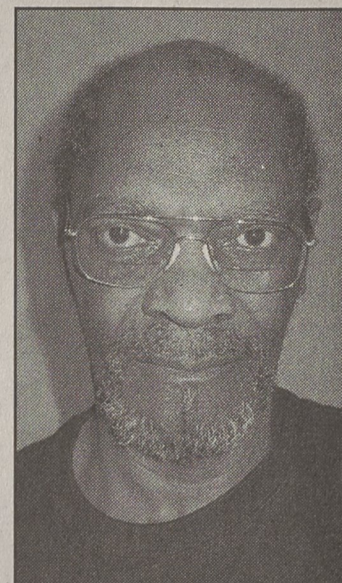
ETTA PARTON

year. Hog jowl meant health; greens were eaten for dollars. Sweet potatoes and corn bread rounded out the meal.

The elders say a white Christmas was not rare when they were children. "We used to get snow at Christmas. We don't now," Mr. Jeffries said.

Weather was the deciding factor on whether Mrs. Ledbetter's family made it to church. She remembers the Christmas story being read during the Wednesday night service before the holiday.

Mr. Jeffries would hear the



GENE JEFFRIES

story at school before the week-long holiday break began.

Both Mrs. Ledbetter and Mrs. Parton remember Christmas plays at church with Mrs. Parton playing Mary one year. Mr. Jeffries' play was held at school.

He and his sisters entertained themselves singing "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Silent Night" and "Joy to the World."

All three agreed that while their childhood celebrations lacked in today's material abundance, there was no shortage of family togetherness.

KM WEATHER REPORT

By Kenneth Kitzmiller

	Dec. 15-21	Year Ago
Total precipitation	0*	.10
Maximum 1 day	0	.10 (16th)
Month to date	2.23	2.81
Year to date	47.91	81.85
Low temperature	13 (19th)	18 (20th)
High temperature	57 (17th)	56 (15th)
Avg. temperature	39.4	39.2
*Snowflakes Sun., Dec. 19		

KIDNEY

From 1A

days," Gannon said.

The family has not been on a vacation since Gannon began dialysis. Despite the restrictiveness of the procedure, Gannon says it has helped him feel "a thousand times better."

With a new kidney to take over for the two rendered obsolete by Membrano proliferative glomerulonephritis type II, Gannon will be free of the procedure.

"It's literally like cutting chains away. You have tubes hooked to you," he said.

Without Gregory's donation, Gannon could easily have spent four or more years awaiting a kidney from a cadaver. Both men are amazed that more people don't mark their driver's licenses to become donors.

"They don't realize the importance," Gannon said.

Gannon has completed an associate's degree at Isothermal. He plans to continue his education after surgery, studying psychology. He hopes to teach at a college.

Gregory says he is not afraid of the surgery nor of losing a kidney.

"It's like God spoke to me, 'go ahead and do it,'" he said.

Gannon, a nursing assistant at White Oak Manor and an LPN student, says he has watched video of the surgery on the internet. He's in the midst of examinations at CMC.

"It's been awesome. I'm excited about this

myself," Gregory said.

Gannon has also educated himself about the disease.

"It's interesting to me because it affects me," he said.

Gregory says he can relate to Gannon's parents Pat and Mike Gannon. His step-daughter Tiffany Noland, 18, lost a kidney when she was 10 years old. She and his wife Jo-Anne Gregory and daughters Cheltea, 13 and Kendra, 12 are all supportive.

"They think it's great," Gregory said.

Gregory will be out of work for eight weeks following surgery. He's using accrued vacation and paid time off and will sit out the spring semester at Isothermal.

Gregory's remaining kidney will enlarge by around 20 percent to compensate. Except for having to avoid high risk sports for fear of injuring the remaining kidney, Gregory will live a normal life.

Gannon will initially take large dosages of anti-rejection, immune suppressing drugs. Gradually the dosage will be lowered. The donated kidney is expected to work for 25 to 30 years.

Gregory receives no monetary compensation for the donation. Like all donors, Gannon has had to undergo a psychiatric exam to insure he understands what he is doing. There is a three in 100,000 chance he could die during the surgery.

Gregory does earn the satisfaction of knowing he has made a tremendous impact on another person's life.

Gannon describes him as "a different kind of person."

The Cotton Gin Salon

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PUBLIC INVITED TO VIEW 3RD ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARADE OF TREES

SUMMIT PLACE ASSISTED LIVING
DECEMBER 11TH THRU
NEW YEARS DAY

The Following Area Businesses have sponsored a Christmas Tree, to be on display in order to bring Christmas to the residents of Summit Place; The Printin - Press; Kings Mountain Life Enrichment Adult Day Care; This & That Novelty Shoppe; Lawrence Patrick Senior Life Center; Total Care Home Health; Houser Drug; Kings Mountain Herald; the Shelby Shopper; Carolina Medical Supply; Timms Furniture; Cleveland Home Health; KM Intermediate School(5th grade All-Stars); Winn Dixie of Dallas and Global USA Online Internet Service